

In womanly strength they can help to spread the higher education, and open the way for a clearer shining of this divine light, the spiritual motherhood that is the gift of God.

THE OUNCE OF PREVENTION

BY DITA H. KINNEY

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At the present time the interest of the nursing profession is so absorbed in the questions of State registration and preliminary and supplementary training that one of the most important stones in the foundations of these magnificent superstructures is completely lost sight of.

The country is to-day full of earnest, intelligent young women who are desirous of preparing themselves to be professional nurses and who are willing and anxious to give the very best that is in them to attain this end, and yet what have such to guide or help them in their quest,—to tell them what the essentials of a proper training are, or to impress them with the importance of securing these? On the other hand, there are numberless hospitals (some of which I could name) which advertise a training-school and recognize no obligation to their nurses beyond the payment of a few dollars at the end of each month. At the close of a stated period—two or three years—the Boards of Directors of these bestow a diploma and a pin upon the poor, duped women whom they have worked nearly to death, and who even yet do not realize that they are and have been nothing but chambermaids. These are then turned loose upon the unsuspecting public as trained nurses. Then follow the just complaints of neglected or abused patients and outraged physicians, and the whole profession suffers.

Where does the fault lie? Where can we fix the responsibility for this monstrous injustice? Surely not with the poor girls, who undertook the work in all good faith, and who have given their time and strength and received nothing in return—who do not even understand what the word training means as we understand it! The awakening comes too late for the women themselves and for the profession when these bring opprobrium upon it by incompetence and unprofessional conduct.

An additional danger which besets the path of these novices lies in the alluring advertisements which appear from time to time in the

papers. The following has been running for some time in one of the most reliable journals in the country, *i.e.*, the *Washington Post*:

LADIES train to nurse—Study at home; wonderfully attractive opportunities and wages; simple, easy; all can learn; our plan indorsed by Chicago's leading physicians, because the only practical one; Pres. Harper, Chicago Univ., indorses correspondence studies; diploma in 6 months; catalogue free. American Correspondence School for Nurses, 169 Dearborn, Chicago.

"Short cuts" are always tempting to youth, and to those with neither experience nor information on the subject what a golden opportunity this seems to offer? There is no one at hand who is qualified to warn them, and the lesson that everything which is worth having must be paid for by a just equivalent in value or effort is often only learned after bitter and disappointing experiences.

Apropos of this matter the *Journal of American Medicine* in its issue of April 27, 1901, says in its editorial columns:

"Nursing schools and diploma mills are springing up with the avowed or concealed purpose of securing diplomas and inclusion in the regularly trained profession before laws shall be passed shutting out such quacks. The nurses of the country should zealously push forward the passage of laws requiring registration and graduation from some genuine training-school as admission to practice. When diplomas (printed in the alluring circulars in double caps), badges, etc., for a certain amount of money may be obtained by correspondence from poor dupes who do not know how to read or write, it is already too late for organization against the shameless humbuggery."

The time has indeed arrived when "the nursing profession should zealously push forward towards registration," and this must, beyond all doubt, elevate the degree of professional education demanded of the various training-schools. But while waiting for this millennium and its still more remote beneficial results, can not—ought not—something be done to protect those who are about to take up the work of trained nursing by the enactment of laws that would make it impossible for a hospital to take everything and give nothing?

Our National Alumnae and Superintendents' Society have their *raison d'être* in the firm purpose which looks to the elevation of the training-schools, their educational standards, and the well-being of the whole profession. It would seem as if the field of their efforts might be broadened yet more, and active measures taken to have fixed by law the minimum degree of educational advantages a school *must* offer before it could be incorporated under the law or be permitted to issue diplomas to its nurses. This is required in other educational institu-

tions, colleges of letters, law, dentistry, and medicine. Why not in nursing schools? Men who are practising law or medicine under diplomas from bogus colleges are prosecuted, if such facts become known. Why should nurses holding similar certificates be allowed to go on unmolested working an unspeakable wrong to themselves, to their patients, and to the whole profession of properly trained nurses?

It is well known that from motives of economy any and all kinds of institutions establish training-schools without any regard to how restricted the field may be from which the nurses must gain their experience—eye and ear hospitals, hospitals for diseases of women, of children, sanatoria for cold-water therapy or electrical treatment, institutions for cure of drug habits and alcoholism. Young women who have served a term in these institutions are given diplomas and take their places in the world as trained nurses. The women themselves do not realize that they have no right to the name.

How best to reach and right this monstrous injustice is a serious problem, and it is possible that in accomplishing this great good to the many hardship will fall upon the few. But even at such a price the object gained is surely worth all it may cost, and all effort and endeavor should be put forth to save the young and earnest toiler who has earned by faithful service the right to an equipment for the battle of life, and who finds herself at the supreme moment, when she is entering the fray, with empty hands.

HOME ECONOMICS

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It is always well for us to take a broad view of our work and see it in its relations. The one whose idea of the home is comprehended under shelter, food, and clothing will both lack a motive for giving effective help, and will find her power to give it circumscribed.

It is only as we understand something of the meaning of the home, as we see that it is responsible for the development of character and for the formation of high ideals, as we realize that even on the physical side it involves the application of modern science and art, that we are in